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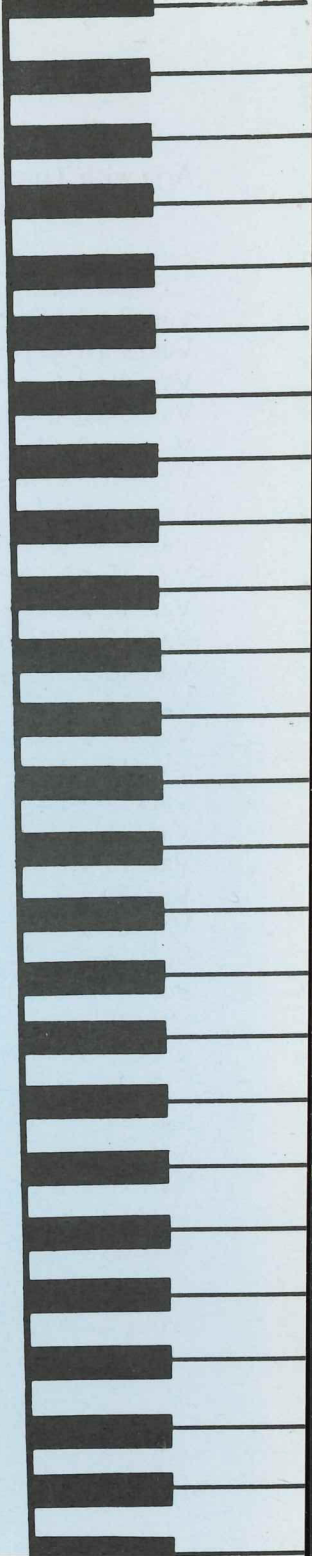
present

**rosalyn
tureck**
pianist

macmillan theatre,
edward johnson building

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 1978

8:30 p.m.



PROGRAM

Aria with Thirty Variations "Goldberg" Variations

J. S. Bach

Aria

Var. 1 a 1 Clavier

Var. 2 a 1 Clavier

Var. 3 a 1 Clavier Canone all'Unisono

Var. 4 a 1 Clavier

Var. 5 a 1 Ovvero 2 Clavier

Var. 6 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Seconda

Var. 7 a 1 Ovvero 2 Clavier

Var. 8 a 2 Clavier

Var. 9 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Terza

Var. 10 a 1 Clavier Fughetta

Var. 11 a 2 Clavier

Var. 12 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Quarta

Var. 13 a 2 Clavier

Var. 14 a 2 Clavier

Var. 15 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Quinta

Var. 16 a 1 Clavier Overture and Fughetta

Var. 17 a 2 Clavier

Var. 18 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Sesta

Var. 19 a 1 Clavier

Var. 20 a 2 Clavier

Var. 21 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Settima

Var. 22 a 1 Clavier

Var. 23 a 2 Clavier

Var. 24 a 1 Clavier Canone all'Ottava

Var. 25 a 2 Clavier

Var. 26 a 2 Clavier

Var. 27 a 1 Clavier Canone alla Nona

Var. 28 a 2 Clavier

Var. 29 a 1 Ovvero 2 Clavier

*Var. 30 a 1 Clavier Quodlibet

Aria da Capo

*This variation in the form of a quodlibet (musical joke) consists of two folk songs, "I have not been with you for so long" and "Cabbages and turnips have driven me away", the melodies of which are developed contrapuntally and follow the harmony of the aria, as do all the variations.

The Aria appears in the Anna Magdalena Notebook as a Sarabande. Spitta claims that this Sarabande was written long before the variations were conceived. This is indeed possible for Bach was always re-using or transcribing his music for new

works. The variations are built on the bass line and harmony of the aria; this method frees Bach's inventiveness, for here he has a strong, simple harmonic base which upholds endless possibilities of structure. Thus, the variations encompass canons, fuguetas, free imitation, dance form, ornamental and figurative styles. The order and structure of the variations is built around a plan of nine canons. The first canon, variation 3, is built on the unison. Each succeeding canon is composed on a progressively larger interval ending with the last canon on the ninth, variation 27. The canons are worked in two voices with the bass forming a free third line which adheres to the harmonic movement of the aria but moves freely within it. The canon on the ninth is the only exception to this structure: it appears in only two voices, canonically strict and deceptively simple. Its transparency is an extremely dramatic touch following as it does, the enormous complexity of structure, depth and intensity of emotion which have been built up. The shape of the work is in its whole, and in the infinite subtlety of relationships of movement to movement. Each canon is surrounded by two free variations which, however free, are alive with contrapuntal interest. The free variations form a sort of flesh and blood to the skeletal structure of the canons — thus the first canon appears as variation 3, the last canon as variation 27. Variation 1 calls up the vision of a great archway to the experience before us, with variation 2, a delicate movement in imitation, pointing the way to the variety of devices which may be expected, and gently leading to the amazing canon on the unison in variation 3. The stage is set for variety of mood, figure and structure. Henceforth, with the exception of great fugues, almost every aspect of Bach's art comes into play. The free variations often contrast with each other in toccata-like and dance styles. The variations, including the canons, are conceived in terms of their successive relationships of density of structure. Variation 15 is an unparalleled example of chromatic writing, combining breadth and depth of feeling within a discipline of the canon on the fifth. Its ending note comes not on the conventional tonic but on the fifth. Like variation 25, this variation can hardly be dated in idiom. Variations 15 and 25 are pieces which for intensity of emotional expression and brilliance of chromatic structure Bach sometimes equalled, as in the B minor fugue from Book I of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, but never surpassed. Variation 30 stands outside the formal plan between variations 1 and 29. It is a joke, the *quodlibet* being a musical prank which the Bach family and their friends used to indulge in on social occasions. The humorous and good-natured style of the last variation of this colossal work reminds one of the humour of the last fugue in B minor, in Book II of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, finishing off a great and varied collection of elaborately conceived works. This parallel illuminates an interesting facet of Bach's personality, which expresses itself in a sense of style which, consciously or unconsciously, chooses geniality and good humour as the last idea in the unfolding of a form which has been worked out in innumerable ways. The actual ending of the "Goldberg" Variations is given to the return of the aria. The return to the beginning, completing the life cycle, carries with it a fundamental sense of renewal and yet reveals a new meaning in the beginning which is twofold — the potentialities of the beginning and an infinitely greater understanding of its meaning

as the result of having undergone the full experience of these potentialities. This return to the beginning is one of the most sublime moments in music.

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ROSALYN TURECK

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